



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

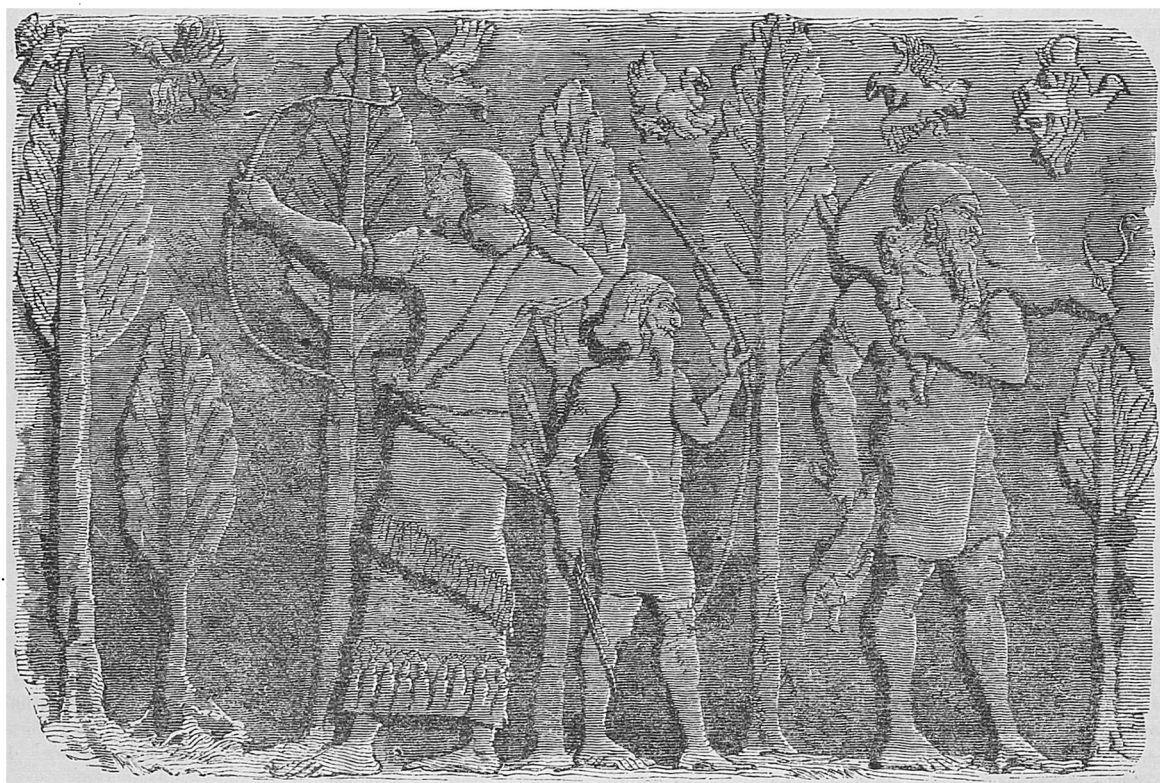
JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## FIELD SPORTS OF ASSYRIA.

THE excavation of the ancient cities of Nineveh, Babylon, and Khorsabad, has presented us with glimpses of the every-day life of their former inhabitants, their amusements, their religious rites, and their domestic customs, which would have remained lost to us had the accumulated sand and rubbish of ages continued to cover their ruins. In baring to the daylight and the curious eye of the visitor the long-buried towns of Pompeii and Herculaneum, we come upon the villas, the temples, and the theatres of the luxurious patricians of Rome, and acquire a knowledge of their manners and customs which renders intelligible many an otherwise obscure passage in Ovid, or Horace, or Juvenal; but in exploring the ruins of Nineveh, we survey the monuments of periods, in comparison with which that of the towns buried by the lava of Vesuvius is modern. We stand on the site of the oldest city in the world, dating from the epoch of Nimrod, the "mighty hunter," and walk through the chambers of the palace which Sennacherib raised and Sardanapalus destroyed.

and on a slab found in the same mound were sculptured a hind and fawn, and a wild sow with her young ones among tall reeds.

Other indications of the nature of the chase in that remote epoch were afforded by the designs traced on the bronze and iron utensils discovered in the excavations of Nimroud. Among these was a bronze plate, the rim embossed with figures of greyhounds pursuing a hare, and the centre representing encounters between men and lions. Another bore figures of stags, wild goats, bears, and leopards, with a rim of trees and deer. A third had figures of deer, hares, and lions, represented upon it. A large bowl has a hunting-scene represented in bold relief on its sides. The hunter stands in a chariot drawn by two horses, and driven by a charioteer, and turning round, discharges an arrow at a lion, which is already wounded; while another hunter pierces the animal with a spear. Above the second hunter a hawk is hovering. All these animals are still denizens of the woods and plains bordering the Tigris, though probably in diminished numbers. Speaking of the patches



ASSYRIAN CHASE IN THE FOREST.—FROM A BAS-RELIEF IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

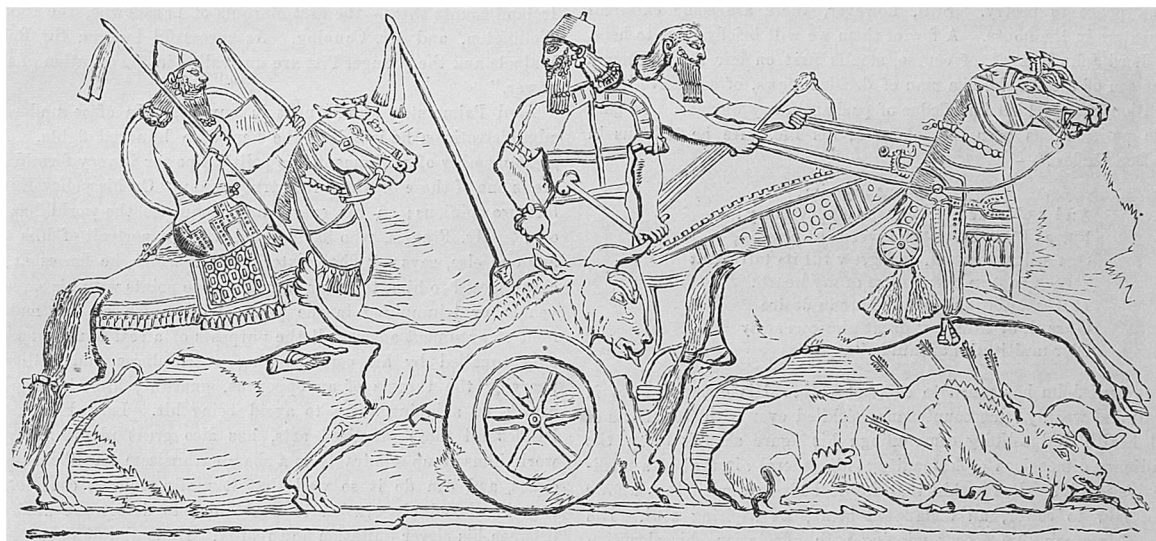
Notwithstanding the thousands of years that have glided down the resistless stream of time into the ocean of eternity since the palaces of Nineveh and Khorsabad were raised, the sculptures on their walls afford as much information on Assyrian life and manners at that remote epoch, as the vessels and ornaments, found at Pompeii and Herculaneum, do of the days of Pliny. In the present article we propose to notice the field sports of the Assyrians, as illustrated by the bas-reliefs now in the British Museum. In clearing away some rubbish at Khorsabad, one of Mr. Layard's overseers discovered two bas-reliefs sculptured in black stone. On one of these slabs, from a restoration of which the above engraving is taken, a fowler is represented discharging an arrow at a bird on the wing, apparently a partridge, or perhaps a wild pigeon. Behind the sportsman are two others; one carrying a bow and arrows, the other a hare in his hand, and a gazelle over his shoulder. Among the seals, also, which Mr. Layard discovered at Kouyunjik, was one representing a horseman in pursuit of a stag;

of bush which form green oases in the arid plain of Sinjar, Mr. Layard says: "Among them lurked game of various kinds. Troops of gazelles sprang from the low cover, and bounded over the plain. The greyhounds coursed hares; the horsemen followed a wild boar of enormous size, and nearly white from age; and the doctor, who was the sportsman of the party, shot a bustard, with beautiful speckled plumage and a ruff of long feathers round its neck. This bird was larger than the common small bustard, but apparently of the same species. Other bustards, besides many birds of the plover kind, rose from these tufts, which seemed to afford food and shelter to a variety of living creatures." The lion, too, is not uncommon in the jungles of the Khabour, and the Bedouins frequently find their cubs in the spring. The footprints of these animals were also discovered by Mr. Layard and his party about the mound of Niffer; and in the jungles bordering on the Tigris, leopards, hyenas, jackals, deer, antelopes, and wild boars are frequently met with.

The chase of the more formidable animals, as the lion and the wild bull, appears to have been pursued in chariots, as that of the tiger is in India on the backs of elephants. One of the bas-reliefs from Kouyunjik, now in the British Museum, and engraved below, represents a hunting scene very similar to that of the lion already described, but the object of the chase in this instance is the wild bull. The chariot is driven by a charioteer, and drawn by two horses; the hunter holds by the horns a wounded bull, who is plunging over the wheels, and his spear is fixed in a socket made in the back of the chariot to receive it. A horseman, leading another horse, and carrying a spear in his right hand, is riding behind, and the hunter in the chariot is looking back towards him, as if invoking his assistance. Another bull, pierced with several arrows, and apparently in the agonies of death, is lying upon the ground, under the feet of the chariot-horses.

Probably the chase of the lion and wild bull was reserved for the kings and chief men, similar reservations having existed in most countries, while passing through what may be called the hunting

stage in the history of society. As the animals of the chase became scarce, the idea of their domestication would suggest itself, and society would gradually pass into the pastoral stage. In the arid plains of south-western Asia, the adoption of the new mode of obtaining subsistence would necessitate a wandering life, such as the Arabs and Turcomans have continued to lead to the present day; but, in time, fertile spots would be found where agriculture could be pursued, and there villages would spring up, to become cities as the population increased, and the mechanical arts began to be acquired and practised. Still, as in all semi-barbarous communities war and the chase are the only honourable occupations, the laws of the hunting epoch would be preserved, and enforced with the more strictness in proportion as the objects of royal and princely sport became scarce. The lion and the wild bull, from the character of savage majesty associated with them, would be regarded as appertaining to the amusements of royalty, while any one would be allowed to chase the deer, the gazelle, or the wild goat.



ASSYRIANS HUNTING THE WILD BULL.—FROM A BAS-RELIEF IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

## PEERS AND M.P.'S.

NOTHING, observes Disraeli, is more singular than the various success of men in the House of Commons. Fellows who have been the oracles of coteries from their birth; who have gone through the regular process of gold medals, senior wranglerships, and double-firsts; who have nightly sat down amid tumultuous cheering in debating societies, and can harangue with an unruffled forehead and unfaltering voice from one end of a dinner-table to the other; who on all occasions have something to say, and can speak with fluency on what they know nothing about, no sooner rise in the house than their spell deserts them. All their effrontery vanishes. Common-place ideas are rendered more uninteresting by commonplace delivery; and keenly alive as even boobies are in these sacred walls to the ridiculous, no one appears more thoroughly aware of his unexpected and astounding deficiencies than the orator himself. He regains his seat, hot and hard, sultry and stiff, with a burning cheek and icy hand, repressing his breath, lest it should give evidence of an existence of which he is ashamed, and clenching his fist, that the pressure may secretly convince him that he has not as completely annihilated his stupid body as his false reputation. On the other hand, persons whom the women have long deplored, and the men long pitied, as having no manner; who blush when you speak to them, and blunder when they speak to you, suddenly jump up in the house with a self-confidence which is only equalled by their consummate ability.

Another thing very remarkable in the House of Commons is the decline of oratory there. It is common to talk of the decline of oratory. We are all of us apt to look at the men and times of earlier days as more grand and spirit-stirring than our own. It is true, as Campbell sings,

“ 'Tis distance lends enchantment to the view; ”

but still the fact is clear, that men do not talk of the orators of our times as our fathers talked of the orators of theirs. One reason may be, that oratory—the power of making a neat and appropriate speech—is much more common than it was. The average debating power is greater, and therefore particular stars shine less. But we are inclined to believe that the standard of excellence in the old House of Commons was higher than it has been since it has become reformed. The speeches of Chatham, Pitt, Sheridan, Fox, Grey, Plunkett, and the earlier speeches of Brougham, were delivered to an assembly, the *élite* of whom were the choice spirits of the age. The greater part of the members of those parliaments were men to whom politics were a profession—with too many a trade. A man could not then so readily ride into office on the shoulders of the multitude. To sway the House of Commons was then much more essential than it is now. A great proportion of the members were undergoing their training for parliamentary speaking, to whom a rigid observation of those who were to form their models was a part of their duty, as being a part of their political education. The majority of the remainder were men of education and long political experience, grown old in the habit of weighing the relative value of